YOUR GUIDE
TO COUNCIL TAX 2018-19

Cheltenham Borough Council | Gloucestershire County Council
The Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire
Your council tax in numbers

This is how much the average† home will pay each week, split as follows:

£3.90
Rubbish collection, environmental health, parks and gardens, planning, sport & leisure
BOROUGH COUNCIL

£4.36
Crime reduction, safer communities, criminal justice, peace & good order
POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER

£23.70
Education, social care, fire service, roads, libraries
COUNTY COUNCIL

Total £31.96

† Band D
Our commitment to you

1. We will continue to make efficiency savings; this year we will save a further £716k without cutting frontline services.

2. Streamlining services, reviewing the council’s accommodation and investing in the local economy are some of the ways the council is aiming to become self-financing and less dependent on government support.

3. There will be an increase in council tax, in line with inflation of 2.99 per cent. Some of this income will be used to extend Cheltenham’s existing events offer, adding greater diversity to the festival and entertainments calendar as well as contributing to the local economy.

2018 will be a big year for Cheltenham:

— Town centre improvements continue, actively supported by the Business Improvement District, from impressive Christmas lights displays through to new store openings, including John Lewis. 2018 will also see the start of the next phase of High Street improvements with new paving, planting and furniture.

— The construction of a new crematorium and chapels at the site of the cemetery in Bouncers Lane is progressing well. Last year saw the completion of design work and the approval of planning applications. Construction on site began last October and, if all goes well, the new buildings will be open in Spring 2019.

— Marketing Cheltenham is a new service which will raise the profile of Cheltenham and support the visitor economy. With its brand new look, VisitCheltenham is the place to go for what’s on, where to go and things to do in Cheltenham. Find out more www.visitcheltenham.com

Your vote, your voice

Cheltenham Borough Council elections will take place on 3 May 2018. Register to vote – it’s simpler, clearer and faster online www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

If you are unsure whether or not you are currently registered please contact the elections team on 01242 264132 or email elections@cheltenham.gov.uk

Call 01242 262 626 or visit www.cheltenham.gov.uk

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Gloucestershire County Council budget 2018-19

Gloucestershire is a great place to live, work and do business. Most people enjoy a high standard of living, with our health and well-being comfortably above the UK average. However, we know there are areas where people need more help and support to live the lives they want, especially our vulnerable adults, families and children.

Our population is also changing. We expect the number of older people and children to continue to rise, but no change in the number of working adults. That means overall, the number of people who rely on the council is likely to increase.

Our vision is to improve the quality of life for Gloucestershire people and communities, and here’s how we will spend taxpayers’ money in the next financial year to help achieve that:

**Children & families**
£102.974 million
(including schools, children’s services, prevention & wellbeing)

**Adult services**
£133.172 million
(including help for people with learning disabilities, older people, vulnerable adults)

**Public health**
£24.271 million
(ring-fenced grant)

**Communities & infrastructure**
£80.426 million
(including highways, libraries, trading standard, fire & rescue, waste)

**Technical & corporate**
£44.721 million
(including cost of funding infrastructure investment)

**Business support**
£27.917 million

Here’s how we plan to spend your money this year

The total budget is £413.5 million for 2018-19

In addition to the budget a further £4.6 million is anticipated as part of the business rate retention pilot for 2018-19, which allows us to keep more of the county’s business rates. This money will be invested in the following:

- £2.6 million for children’s social care
- £1 million for adult social care
- £0.53 million for the Highways Local Scheme
- £0.47 million for electric vehicle infrastructure
Where does most of your money go?

Council services currently help 25,000 people in Gloucestershire who have a disability, are vulnerable, or live with an age related disorder. We know more people want to live independently, and we’re using technology like Telecare so people can stay in their own homes.

With numbers expected to rise, demand is going to continue to increase. That’s why we need more people to help themselves, so we can be there for those who need us most. We will be investing an extra £2.5 million overall to protect vulnerable older people.

What about the roads?

Last year, the council promised an extra £150 million for our roads over the next 5 years. That money is being spent on everything from potholes repairs to road safety schemes. Following the Elmbridge roundabout improvements, we will be redesigning Over and Cross Keys roundabouts to help keep our county moving.

The council has also put aside £2.74 million to support Highways England’s A417 safety improvements and money for the Highways Local Scheme giving every county councillor £20,000 to spend on improving highways in their area. With all this work going on, it means there will be some disruption on our roads. Thank you for your patience – it will be worth it.

Are we doing enough to protect our children and young people?

Last year, Ofsted told us our children’s services were inadequate and we are determined to improve. The latest feedback from inspectors was that we have addressed many of the issues, but we need to do more.

We will be investing an extra £16.3 million to help the most vulnerable children and young people in the county, funding more social workers, as well as services like foster care and adoptions plus a further £2.6 million from the business rate pilot.

For the full budget visit www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/GCCbudget
How much you pay

Which band?
Your property has been assessed for council tax in one of eight valuation bands (A–H) according to its estimated sale value at 1 April 1991. The table below shows the council tax payable for each band for this year.

If you are a band D payer, £203.01 will go to Cheltenham Borough Council, £226.49 will be going to the Police and Crime Commissioner and £1,232.21 will go towards services supplied by the county council.

The £1,232.21 for the county council includes a charge of £68.08 for adult social care functions.

The right band
There are very few circumstances in which appeals against banding can be made and are restricted to:

— an increase in the property value resulting from building work
— a decrease in the property value due to the demolition of any part of the property, any changes in the physical state of the local area or an adaption for use by someone with a disability
— a change in the balance between domestic and business use of your property

Making an appeal does not allow you to withhold payment of council tax. If your appeal is successful we will refund any overpayment.

Next step
A council tax payer can ask the Valuation Office Agency to review their council tax band or can make a proposal to formally challenge their band. Council tax payers need to provide reasons why they believe their banding is incorrect.

Further information can be found at www.gov.uk/voa/contact or call 0300 050 1501.

### Bands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bands</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County</td>
<td>776.08</td>
<td>905.44</td>
<td>1,034.78</td>
<td>1,164.13</td>
<td>1,422.82</td>
<td>1,681.52</td>
<td>1,940.21</td>
<td>2,328.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Social Care</td>
<td>45.39</td>
<td>52.95</td>
<td>60.52</td>
<td>68.08</td>
<td>83.21</td>
<td>98.34</td>
<td>113.47</td>
<td>136.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total County</td>
<td>821.47</td>
<td>958.39</td>
<td>1,095.30</td>
<td>1,232.21</td>
<td>1,506.03</td>
<td>1,779.86</td>
<td>2,053.68</td>
<td>2,464.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police &amp; Crime Commissioner</td>
<td>150.99</td>
<td>176.16</td>
<td>201.32</td>
<td>226.49</td>
<td>276.82</td>
<td>327.15</td>
<td>377.48</td>
<td>452.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheltenham Borough</td>
<td>135.34</td>
<td>157.90</td>
<td>180.45</td>
<td>203.01</td>
<td>248.12</td>
<td>293.24</td>
<td>338.35</td>
<td>406.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total council tax</td>
<td>1,107.80</td>
<td>1,292.45</td>
<td>1,477.07</td>
<td>1,661.71</td>
<td>2,030.97</td>
<td>2,400.25</td>
<td>2,769.51</td>
<td>3,323.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(non parished areas)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*If you live in one of the five parish areas you will pay an additional amount of council tax which goes to the parish council. The amount will be shown on your bill. For more details about parishes go to www.cheltenham.gov.uk/parishcouncils

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[Email the council tax helpline counciltax@cheltenham.gov.uk or call 01242 264 161]
Discounts

Disabled persons reductions
Your bill may be reduced if your home has certain features which are essential, or of major importance, to an adult or child with a disability, who lives in the property. These features are:

— a room (other than a bathroom, kitchen or toilet) which is used by the disabled person (eg, a room used for dialysis equipment). Re-arranging rooms used for their normal purpose (eg, a bedroom on the ground floor) would not qualify

— an additional bathroom or kitchen required for the use of the disabled person

— sufficient floor space for a wheelchair

If you qualify we will treat your property as if it is in the valuation band below, eg, if your property is in band C you will pay the council tax for band B. You can still get a reduction if your property is in band A.

Second homes
Properties that are furnished but not occupied as anyone’s main home are classed as second homes. No discount is awarded.

Properties undergoing major repair
Unoccupied and unfurnished properties undergoing structural alteration or major repair are subject to a 25% discount for a maximum period of 12 months.

Unoccupied & unfurnished properties
Properties which are unoccupied and unfurnished will be granted a 25% discount for up to 6 months from the date furniture is removed. The full charge will then be payable.

Discounts for annexes
From April 2014 a 50% discount may apply where an annexe is occupied by a relative of the council tax payer for the main property, or where it is used as part of the main property.

An exemption already exists for annexes occupied by elderly or disabled relatives – see page 8.

Long term empty properties
No discount is awarded in respect of properties which have been unoccupied and unfurnished for more than 6 months. The full council tax is charged until the property has been empty for 2 years. The Empty Homes Premium will then apply and the council tax will be 150%.

Discounts
If you live alone your bill will be reduced by 25%.
If you, or someone living with you fits into one of the categories below and there are no other adults living in the property, you could also get a reduction.

— full time students, student nurses, apprentices, youth training trainees
— 18–19 year old (at or just left school)
— hospital/hospice patient (permanent)
— residential care/nursing home resident
— persons over 18 in receipt of child benefit
— severely mentally impaired
— hostel/night shelter resident
— member of religious communities
— full time carer (excluding those caring for husband, wife, partner or child)
— persons in detention
— members of International Headquarters and Defence Organisations
— visiting forces
— partners of students who are not British
— diplomats

In extreme circumstances the council has discretionary powers to reduce the council tax payable in respect of individual cases.
Exemptions

Is your property exempt?
Some properties – both occupied and unoccupied are exempt from council tax. Please contact us for more information if your property falls into one of these categories.

Property unoccupied and:
B it is owned by and was last occupied for the purpose of a charity (exempt for up to six months)
D the owner/tenant is in prison
E the owner/tenant is receiving personal care permanently in a hospital or home
F the person liable to pay council tax has died, the property has remained unoccupied since the date of death and probate has not been granted. In some circumstances the exemption may continue for 6 months after probate
G it is forbidden by law to occupy
H it is awaiting occupation by a minister of religion
I the owner/tenant is living elsewhere to receive personal care
J the owner/tenant is living elsewhere to provide personal care to another person
K the owner/tenant has moved to become a student
L it has been repossessed by a mortgage lender
Q it is the responsibility of a bankrupt’s trustee
R it comprises a pitch or mooring unoccupied by a caravan or boat
T it comprises a self contained unit which cannot be let separately from the main property without breaching planning conditions

Property occupied by:
M students in hall of residence
N other qualifying full time students
O members of the armed forces in MOD accommodation
P members and dependants of visiting forces
S person(s) under the age of 18
U the severely mentally impaired
V people with diplomatic privilege or immunity
W elderly or disabled relative living in self contained unit of the main property

Appeals against your council tax liability

If you disagree with some aspect of a council tax bill because you do not think you are liable for the council tax for that dwelling, or you think an exemption or a discount should be applied, you can appeal. You can also appeal if you disagree with the amount of council tax support you have been awarded.

You should appeal to the council in the first instance. If you don’t get a response or continue to dispute the decision after the council has responded, you have the right to appeal to the Valuation Tribunal. Contact the council tax helpline on 01242 264 161 for more details.

Appeals can be made at www.valuationtribunal.gov.uk or telephone 0300 123 2035 or email vtwhitechapel@vts.gsi.gov.uk

Appeals can also be made in writing to Valuation Tribunal, Second Floor, 120 Leman Street, London E1 8EU.
Pay the easy way

You pay council tax in 10 monthly instalments. The easiest way to pay is by Direct Debit. You can choose a payment date of either 1st, 15th, 28th or the last day of each month. Contact the council tax helpline on 01242 264 161 to supply your bank details.

Pay by credit or debit card
Use our 24 hour automated telephone payment system by calling 0300 456 2774 or pay online at www.cheltenham.gov.uk. Choosing this option – instead of paying by cheque – helps keep council tax lower.

Unable to pay?
Your council tax should be paid as requested on your bill otherwise recovery action may be taken which could incur you with additional costs.

If you are finding it difficult to pay your council tax please contact us quickly on 01242 264 161 so we can help you. We will be able to spread your monthly instalments over 12 months instead of 10 months.

Help to pay your council tax
Council tax support helps people on low income or no income to pay their council tax. It is means tested so the amount you get depends on household income and/or savings and the amount of council tax you are due to pay.

If you claim universal credit you must apply to the council for council tax support.

For further information contact the benefits helpline on 01242 264 341 or email benefits@cheltenham.gov.uk

You can receive your council tax bill by email. Register online at www.cheltenham.gov.uk

What you need to know
Universal Credit (UC) is a new benefit for working age people who are on a low income or out of work and is being rolled out across Gloucestershire. Cheltenham is now a Full Service UC area.

UC replaces six existing benefits, namely housing benefit, income support, job-seeker’s allowance, employment and support allowance, child tax credits and working tax credits (NB. this does not include contribution-based JSA and ESA). Instead of receiving different benefits you’ll receive just one monthly payment to cover all of them. It will be paid into your bank or building society in arrears once a month.

When it comes to your rent, a housing element is included in your UC payment. Currently, the council can pay housing benefit directly to your landlord – be it a private landlord, a housing association or the council – but if you receive UC it will be up to you to manage your monthly finances and ensure that you pay your rent to your landlord on time. For some people this will be a big change.

Does it affect me?
If you’re a new benefit claimant you’re likely to receive UC.

If you’re already claiming benefits, you’re unlikely to be affected unless your circumstances change and you have to make a claim for UC.

If you’re a pensioner you won’t be affected – you’ll carry on receiving existing benefits as normal.

For everything you need to know about UC visit www.gov.uk/universal-credit or call the UC Free Phone Helpline on 0800 328 5644.
Dear Resident,

This year, I have had to ask you to pay a little bit more for your police service. It was not a request I made lightly so I will take this opportunity to explain why.

In meetings with the Home Secretary and other Government representatives, I have consistently made the case that central government cuts in the Constabulary budget of around £30 million since 2010 have been to the detriment of neighbourhood policing. That is not just my view, people I meet around the county complain about it probably more than anything else.

The Government’s response was to decide not to put any more of ‘its own’ money – from central taxation – into policing, with the likelihood of no further increase until 2020 at the earliest. Instead, they gave Police and Crime Commissioners like me permission to increase the portion of local taxation you pay for policing; in other words council tax. The Home Office proposed a 5.6 per cent rise.

Clearly, the Government sees the solution to police funding in local not national taxation and has passed the baton to me. A more modest increase in council tax of 2 per cent might be more popular but it would have been to the detriment of the Constabulary and left our communities vulnerable and I am not prepared to preside over that. As precept calculations are based on an average band D house, an increase of £12 p.a., or £1 per month, gives the Constabulary chance to make improvements rather than looking over its shoulder as it has had to do for the last seven years.

The good news is that the Chief Constable can re-shape his neighbourhood policing operation, recruit 16 new officers to work more closely in urban and rural communities and in schools and aim to tackle the expanding workload in child protection and child sexual exploitation. He can provide officers with body worn videos which, with fewer police on the streets, is very important not only for gathering evidence but also to protect officers and help keep them safe in potentially dangerous situations.

Furthermore, I have again set aside 1 per cent of the Constabulary budget to fund your ideas for reducing crime and anti-social behaviour in your communities. I am proud to report that the Commissioner’s Fund is now supporting more than 400 such projects.

This year will also see the re-development of Stroud Police Station which has hardly been touched since it opened nearly 50 years ago. Like the Forest of Dean Police Station in Coleford, which we re-launched in 2016, it will have an enhanced community element.

In recent assessments by Her Majesty’s Inspector of Constabulary (HMIC), my office and the Constabulary have been consistently praised for their financial management. I promise we will continue to use your money with care and respect.

Yours,

Martin Surl
Police and Crime Commissioner
### SPENDING PLANS

**The level of council tax**
The band D council tax you will pay this year for services provided by the Police and Crime Commissioner is £226.49, which is 5.6 per cent more than last year. The amount we will spend on services will increase by 3.7 per cent.

The Minister for Policing has allowed PCCs in 2018-19 to increase their council tax precept levels by £12, to give PCCs the flexibility to make the right choices for their local area to protect frontline services.

Planned savings of £1.4 million are included in the budget for 2018-19, which would enable the budget to be balanced with a 2 per cent increase in the precept. An increase of £12 (5.6 per cent) will provide an additional £1.7 million to invest in high priority areas such as neighbourhood policing and child protection.

Over the last seven years £32 million savings have been required to balance the budget. The PCC will use the flexibility provided by the Home Office to invest £1.7 million, back into policing in Gloucestershire in high priority areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Requirement</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
<th>2018–19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constabulary</strong></td>
<td>£000</td>
<td>£000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Officers</td>
<td>60,945</td>
<td>60,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCSOs</td>
<td>3,737</td>
<td>3,974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police staff</td>
<td>23,328</td>
<td>24,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other running costs</td>
<td>22,502</td>
<td>25,812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital financing</td>
<td>2,118</td>
<td>2,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenditure</strong></td>
<td>112,630</td>
<td>117,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest and other income</td>
<td>-2,185</td>
<td>-3,404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific grants</td>
<td>-5,116</td>
<td>-5,031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net expenditure</strong></td>
<td>105,329</td>
<td>109,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of PCC</td>
<td>827</td>
<td>854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissioning fund</td>
<td>1,072</td>
<td>1,112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total budget</strong></td>
<td>107,228</td>
<td>111,221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer to reserves</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net budget requirement</strong></td>
<td>107,228</td>
<td>111,221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funded by:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government grant</td>
<td>59,250</td>
<td>59,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collection fund surplus</td>
<td>756</td>
<td>955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Which leaves council tax payers to fund</strong></td>
<td>47,222</td>
<td>51,016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How our budget compares with last year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Comparison</th>
<th>£000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original budget 2017-18</td>
<td>107,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay rises and inflation</td>
<td>2,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-off pay rise</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional costs</td>
<td>1,377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment in priority areas</td>
<td>1,741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned savings</td>
<td>-1,439</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget requirement 2018-19</strong></td>
<td>111,221</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Investment in the future**
The Commissioner plans to spend £4.6 million in 2018-19 on capital schemes to improve operational effectiveness and service delivery. This will be paid for from government grants, reserves and revenue contributions.

**How many staff we employ**
The Commissioner has budgeted to employ the full-time equivalent of 1,853 staff at 31 March 2019.

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The Police and Crime Commissioner  
01452 754 348  
pcc@gloucestershire.pnn.police.uk  
www.gloucestershire-pcc.gov.uk  
Follow PCC on twitter.com/GlosPCC

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**Constabulary**  
Call: 101  
101@gloucestershire.police.uk  
www.gloucestershire.police.uk
Service delivery
The council aims to maintain the delivery and high standard of its services to residents, protecting front line services within the reduced funding available. The council had a challenging funding gap of around £1.62 million in 2018-19 as a result of increased costs, the continued impact of low interest rates on investment income and reductions in government funding. The council continues to review alternative methods of delivery of services through its Commissioning work. This enables some services to be provided through partnership and shared working arrangements, reducing costs and creating efficiencies of service. This work has resulted in savings identified from 2020 vision joint working arrangements with other district and borough councils, the independent management of leisure and culture services by The Cheltenham Trust and the expansion of the waste management company, Ubico Ltd. The council continues to review its internal services, to ensure they are delivered in an efficient manner and seeks to rationalise costs where possible, and also seeks to increase its income through economic growth and continued use of its land and buildings assets.

The council has used a contribution from the Budget Strategy (Support) Reserve of £913k to support the budget. This is a transitional arrangement to give the Council time to deliver its strategy for delivering planned substantial savings over the next 4 year period. Full details of the savings and additional income are available on the council’s website.

How our budget compares with last year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Comparison</th>
<th>£000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Net spending 2017-18</td>
<td>13,854</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less savings &amp; additional income found</td>
<td>-576</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements &amp; new services</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased service costs</td>
<td>1,262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from charging / investments &amp; grants</td>
<td>-375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserves / other</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gross expenditure 2018-19</td>
<td>14,429</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The level of council tax
Council tax is the main source of locally-raised income for this authority and is used to meet the difference between the amount a local authority wishes to spend and the amount it receives from other sources such as government grants. In determining the level of council tax payable, the Cabinet has borne in mind the difficult economic and financial climate that many of our residents face, although our funding from Central Government has deteriorated sharply in the period 2010 to 2018, with further large cuts to come. With this in mind, the council has to consider what level of increase in council tax is sustainable, without creating an increased risk of service cuts and/or larger tax increases in the future. The average council tax you will pay for services provided by the Borough Council is £203.01 for a Band D taxpayer. This is an increase of £5.89 over last year, equating to 11 pence per week.
Investment in the future
In 2018-19 the council plans to spend £23.3 million on capital projects, including £21 million on the creation of the West Cheltenham infrastructure to facilitate a new cyber hub in the area. Other capital expenditure plans include the continued development of the cemetery and crematoria site, Enterprise way industrial units, the vehicle & plant replacement programme, housing enabling and housing grants.

Our staff
The council expects to employ 214 full time equivalent staff in 2018-19 compared with 223 in 2017-18.

The council has generated net £1.62 million savings and additional income as part of the challenge of setting the 2018–19 budgets. Details are available on the council’s website, and include:–

– An increase in council tax in 2018–19 of £5.89 or 2.99 per cent from 2018–19 for a band D property.

– Continued promotion of shared services and other commissioning arrangements to reduce long term expenditure whilst continuing to deliver services.

– Reducing the cost of council assets, for example by the sale of surplus assets and rationalisation of council sites.

– Internal restructures to increase efficiencies, as part of the council’s rolling approach to commissioning services.

– Additional income through economic growth and investment for Cheltenham.

– Increased marketing and events, to promote Cheltenham as a great place to live, work and visit.

– 2 per cent inflationary pay award for staff and elected members for the period 2018–19.

For further information on the budget including a full list of improved services and savings please contact Financial Services on 01242 775 033. A full breakdown of the budget is available at www.cheltenham.gov.uk.
Listening to your views

These continue to be times of significant change for Gloucestershire County Council and our partners. Our strategy “Meeting the Challenge: Together we can” is built on what our communities told us is important. It has ensured that we are financially resilient and able to free up resources to respond to changing need, demand and priorities, and it remains relevant today.

We have been successful in managing our finances well so that we can invest in the areas that really matter. We have made improvements to the way we work and to the services we provide. We have tackled the issues we face today and are developing plans and solutions for the future.

We continue to consult annually on the Council Strategy and the strategy is continuing to help us to change the way we think about, plan and deliver support for vulnerable people and support our other services.

The level of council tax

Following changes to the council tax limits, council tax will increase by 4.49 per cent in 2018-19. This increase includes a precept to fund Adult Social Care of 2 per cent, allowing the council to raise an additional £5.54 million for Adult Social Care Services in addition to the normal council tax charge. The council’s band D council tax is £1,232.21 including this additional precept.

The increase supports a 2018-19 budget of £413.48 million, and the budget contains:

- £28.31 million investment into services, particularly those for older people and vulnerable children and adults
- £6.73 million to cover for increased costs due to inflation.
- Funding for £178.99 million of new capital investment in roads, schools and other services.

In terms of efficiencies, the council is expecting to make savings of £29.26 million in 2018-19, demonstrating the continued commitment to get the most out of funds available and minimise service reductions.

How our budget compares with last year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Comparison</th>
<th>£000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Original budget 2017-18</td>
<td>407,702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflation</td>
<td>6,725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost and spending increases</td>
<td>28,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less cost reductions</td>
<td>-29,261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget 2018-19</strong></td>
<td><strong>413,481</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A full breakdown of the budget is available at www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/GCCbudget including full details of the Adult Social Care Precept. Hard copies are available on request by writing to Joanna Walker, Strategic Finance Director, Gloucestershire County Council, Shire Hall, Westgate Street, Gloucester GL1 2TG
Our vision and values
Our vision continues to be to use the resources available to us to improve the quality of life for Gloucestershire people. Our plans are built on three clear values that underpin our direction and decision, including living within our means, doing the right things, and helping communities help themselves. These values will make sure that the council remains flexible and responsive to local people’s needs and expectations.

Our funding
The funding which the council receives from central government has reduced dramatically in recent years. There have been reductions both in our general funding and in grants for specific services, projects and initiatives and we expect that trend to continue into the foreseeable future.

Schools
The Dedicated Schools Grant is a specific grant funding schools, high needs and early year’s settings. In 2018-19 this grant was announced as £441.747 million, an increase on 2017-18 reflecting changes in pupil numbers and the introduction of new national funding formula.

Investment in the future
The capital programme provides total investment in the county totalling £504.00 million, of which £178.99 million is newly funded in 2018-19. The main investment relates to Communities and Infrastructure (£266.92 million) and Schools and facilities for children (£153.66 million), with the remainder being in Adults (£24.47 million) and Business Support Services (£58.94 million).

Priority schemes totalling £54.00 million, not supported by grants or contributions have been included within the new programme on the basis that they will be funded from internal resources, thereby avoiding the need for new borrowing.

Severn regional flood and coastal committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2017-18 £000</th>
<th>2018-19 £000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gross expenditure</td>
<td>17,885</td>
<td>14,838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Levies raised</td>
<td>1,106</td>
<td>1,128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total council tax base</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>958</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of funding for flood defence comes directly from the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). However, under the new Partnership Funding rule not all schemes will attract full central funding. To provide local funding for local priorities and contributions for partnership funding the Regional Flood and Coastal Committees recommend through the Environment Agency a local levy.

A change in the gross budgeted expenditure between years reflects the programme of works for both capital and revenue needed by the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee to which you contribute. The total Local Levy raised by this committee has increased by 2.00 per cent.

The total Local Levy raised has increased from £1.106 million in 2017-18 to £1.128 million for 2018-19.
Five simple steps to sorted recycling

The materials we collect are loaded into different compartments on our vehicles; this not only keeps them separate but ensures they are of good quality so they can go on to be recycled easily. So please remember to sort your recycling. Getting it right really makes a big difference and means we can recycle even more from the kerbside.

Follow our step-by-step guide to find out how!

**Step 1**
Use one recycling box for plastic bottles, tubs, trays and pots as well as metal tins, cans and empty aerosols.

**Step 2**
Use a second recycling box for all paper and any glass bottles and jars. Help us further by using a third box to separate your glass from your paper if you can!

**Step 3**
Use your blue recycling bag for brown corrugated cardboard or light card. All cardboard must be in the bag.

**Step 4**
Household batteries, small electrical appliances and textiles and shoes must be put in separate carrier bags and put inside a recycling box with the lid closed. Please tie all bags.

**Step 5**
Use your green caddy for food waste. Bag your food waste to help keep your caddy clean.

www.cheltenham.gov.uk 01242 262626